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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1-6. (Canceled).

7. (Previously presented) The method of claim 8, wherein said informing is performed automatically by a server, said first and second users being informed of pages retrieved by one another.

8. (Currently amended) A Web-based collaborative research method, comprising:

determining coordinates for pages which are retrieved by a first user and mapping the coordinates into a space; and

based on said coordinates of said pages, informing a second user of a closeness of a research by said first user,

wherein an intersection of research by said first and second users is graphically displayed to said first and second users,

wherein said determining comprises:

determining a usage habit and a research topic of each of said first user and said second user, wherein said research topic of said first user includes at least one of a previously researched research topic and a current research topic which is currently being researched by said first user; and

correlating said usage habit and said research topic of each of said first user and said second user, and

wherein said notifying comprises:

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notifying said second user that said research topic of said first user is related to

said research topic of said second user.

9-23.   (Canceled).

24.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 25, wherein said notifier resides in a server,

said first and second users being informed of pages retrieved by one another.

25.   (Currently amended) A Web-based collaborative research system for a web portal,

comprising:

a unit for determining coordinates for pages which are retrieved by a first user and

mapping the coordinates into a space;

a notifier for informing, based on said coordinates of said pages, a second user of a

closeness of a research by said first user; and

a display for graphically displaying to said first and second users an intersection of

research by said first and second users,

wherein said unit for determining determines a usage habit and a research topic of each of

said first user and said second user, wherein said research topic of said first user includes at least

one of a previously researched research topic and a current research topic which is currently

being researched by said first user; and

wherein said unit for determining correlates said usage habit and said research topic of

each of said first user and said second user, and

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wherein said notifier informs said second user that said research topic of said first user is

related to said research topic of said second user.

26.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 25, further comprising:

a unit for providing the first user with a trail of research of said second user.

27.   (Original) The system of claim 26, wherein said trail of research comprises a

predetermined sequence of bookmarks leading said first user to a specific point in cyberspace.

28.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 25, wherein, on a user side, said system

further comprises:

a log-in unit for enabling said user to log-in to a collaborative research portal; and

a selector for selecting an existing research session, or creating a new research session.

29.   (Original) The system of claim 28, wherein, on said user side, said system further

comprises:

a retrieval unit for retrieving a first data block;

a receiving unit for receiving data blocks of other users having a predetermined

closeness, and an index of other data blocks relevant to the user's research.

30.   (Original) The system of claim 29, wherein, on a server side, said system further

comprises:

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a transmission unit for sending to the user a list of previously created research sessions;

and

after the retrieving by the user, an adder for adding spatial coordinates of the first data

block to a collection of vertices to a current research session.

31. (Original) The system of claim 30, wherein, on said server side, said system further

comprises:

a calculator for recalculating areas occupied by the vertices of the current research

session, and for calculating an intersection of the current research session with research sessions

created by other users.

32. (Original) The system of claim 31, wherein, on said server side, said system further

comprises:

a determining unit for determining whether any research sessions intersect; and

a notifier for notifying, if any research sessions intersect, users that created the

intersecting sessions.

33. (Previously presented) The system of claim 32, wherein, on said server side, said system

further comprises:

means for sending the users of the intersecting sessions a geometry of the other

intersecting sessions.

34-35. (Canceled).

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36.   (Currently amended) A computer-readable signal-bearing medium tangibly embodying a

program of recordable, machine-readable instructions executable by a digital processing

apparatus to perform a Web-based collaborative research method, comprising:

    determining coordinates for pages which are retrieved by a first user and mapping the

coordinates into a space; and

    based on said coordinates of said pages, informing a second user of a closeness of a

research by said first user,

    wherein an intersection of research by said first and second users is graphically displayed

to said first and second users.

37-47. (Canceled).

48.   (New) The method of claim 8, wherein said second user is selectively informed, based on

said determined coordinates of said pages which are retrieved by said first user, of said closeness

of said research by said first user.

49.   (New) The method of claim 8, wherein said closeness is determined based on the

Euclidean distance of two points in n-dimensional space given by:

$$D(P1, P2) = \sqrt{S_D\ (P1_D\text{-}P2_D)^2}\ .$$

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50.   (New) The method of claim 8, further comprising:

notifying said first user and said second user when said research being performed by said

first user, based on said determined coordinates of said pages which are retrieved by said first

user, intersects with said research begin performed by said second user.

51.   (New) The method of claim 8, graphically displaying an intersection of said research by

said first user and said research by said second user to at least one of said first user and said

second user.

52.   (New) The method of claim 8, wherein said determining comprises:

determining a first set of coordinates for pages which are retrieved by research

performed by a first user and mapping said determined first set of coordinates into a space; and

determining a second set of coordinates for pages which are retrieved by research

performed by a second user and mapping said determined second set of coordinates into said

space; and

correlating said research of said first user with said research of said second user

based on said first set of determined coordinates and said second set of determined coordinates,

wherein said notifying comprises:

selectively notifying at least one of said first user and said second user of a

correlation between said research of said first user and said research of said second user, and

wherein said correlating comprises:

determining a related topic that said first user has at least one of previously

researched and currently is researching.

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53. (New) The method of claim 52, wherein said correlating further comprises:

determining said related topic between said research of said first user and said research of said second user based on said first set of determined coordinates and said second set of determined coordinates.

54. (New) The system of claim 31, wherein, on said server side, said system further comprises:

determining means for determining whether any research sessions intersect;

notifying means for notifying, if any research sessions intersect, users that created the intersecting sessions; and

means for sending the users of the intersecting sessions a geometry of the other intersecting sessions.